



8 July 2005

## *A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER*

Greetings from the Horn of Africa, as you know I assumed command of the Combined Joint Task Force on 17 May, and time has flown by. Our mission, to wage peace across the region, to deny the enemy a safe haven, to increase the capacity for the host nations to provide services for their people and combat terrorism, is rapidly expanding. We are now either providing infrastructure relief or training in Yemen, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Seychelles, and when able, we will plan for operations in Comoros, Sudan and Uganda.

Your Family members are at the very front of this very unconventional war. They are providing water, medical assistance, veterinary services and a possibility for an education by building schools and libraries. The host nation's people are truly appreciative for the opportunity for a better life...and your loved ones are providing that opportunity!

We counter terrorism by providing a secure and stable environment. We seek out those people in need, the disenfranchised, and try to alleviate their suffering. An example is the Andagalina Well near Yoboki, Djibouti. Approximately 1,500 herders live on the harshest land imaginable with very little water, none of which is on the surface. CJTF's well digging unit drilled in unbelievably difficult conditions. Their rig is old and suffered constant breakdowns. To make matters worse, the rig would drill to only 600 feet...about 40 feet too shallow. After almost 5 months and a lot of "Yankee ingenuity", we have finished. The soldiers of the 747<sup>th</sup> Engineering Det pumped water on the US Army's 230<sup>th</sup> Birthday (a coincidence, I'm sure). Now the Djiboutian who eek out a living on that inhospitable land are able to increase the size of their herds and provide a better life for their families.

In another location, a small village in Ethiopia, our SeaBees are building a library for the secondary school. The teachers at the school have no lockers in which to store their school supplies, no faculty room in which to grade papers or tutor students, and very few desks. Yet they ask only for books, printed in English so that their children will be able to compete in the world and achieve a life beyond that which their parents have known.

The peace we are waging is for the next generation...the children of today. We have provided polio vaccinations here in Djibouti, we have updated a hospital, its first update since 1945, and we have built schools where the children learn that the answer to a better life does not lay in violence. These are the battles your loved ones are fighting...and winning. So thank you for your support...

Semper Fidelis

T. F. Ghormley  
Major General, U.S. Marine Corps  
Commander, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa

